



Ending Youth and Family Homelessness

Rebuild Texas Fund

Strategies For Change

thn.org

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Rebuild Texas Fund and Safety Nets for Students and Families Project
- Defining of Youth and Family Homelessness
- PIT Count Basics
- Partners in Ending Youth and Family Homelessness
- Resources
- Contact Information



Safety Nets for Students and Families

“Starting in fall 2018, Texas Network of Youth Services, Texas Homeless Network, and Texas Homeless Education Office began working in partnership with all regions of Texas affected by Hurricane Harvey (outside of Harris County) to support schools and community-based organizations in meeting the needs of homeless youth and families displaced by the storm.”

<http://tnoys.org/safety-nets-for-students/>



Hurricane Harvey PIT Count Question

On the Counting Us app:

Are you homeless as a result of Hurricane Harvey?

Yes

On the Unsheltered paper survey:

26. Are you homeless as a result of Hurricane Harvey?

Yes No Don't Know Refused



Youth Vs. Family Homelessness

- “To prevent and end homelessness among youth in America, we must address the unique needs of pregnant and parenting youth who experience homelessness. Otherwise, we risk missing opportunities to ensure that pregnant youth, young parents, and their children have the resources they need to reach their full potential.” - School House Connection
- Simply put, youth homelessness cannot be solved in isolation from family homelessness, and vice versa.



Subgroups of Homeless Youth

- Sheltered
- Non-sheltered
- Doubled Up
- Transient
- Runaway
- LGBTQ+ youth
- Unaccompanied Youth
- Parenting Youth
- Youth in families



Definition: Literally Homeless (PIT Count Definition)

Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- (i) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation;
- (ii) Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or February 2018 United States Interagency Council on Homelessness 2
- (iii) Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution



Definition: Homeless Children and Youths

- U.S. Department of Education (ED) Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless children and youths as follows: The term "homeless children and youths"—
Meaning individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1) of this title); and includes—
 - i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
 - ii. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C) of this title);
 - iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and iv. migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).



Definition: Unaccompanied Youth

Unaccompanied youth are persons under age 25 who:

- are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as his/her child(ren).

Unaccompanied youth are single youth, youth couples, and groups of youth presenting together as a household



Definition: Parenting Youth

- Parenting youth are youth who identify as the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, where there is no person over age 24 in the household.
- Parenting youth are either a subset of households with children if the parenting youth is between 18 and 24, or households with only children if the parenting youth is under 18



PIT Basics

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count:

- Count of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness carried out on one night within CoC's geographic area.
- It provides information on number and characteristics of persons experiencing homelessness at given point-in-time.



Who counts on the PIT Count?

Who Does Count?

- children and youths are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and iv. migratory children

Who doesn't Count

- children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons
- Children and youth who are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- children and youths who are living in substandard housing,



Differences Between Youth and Adult Homelessness

- The Root Cause of Youth Homelessness is different
- Homeless Youth Tend to Lack Social Support Networks
- The Opportunity to Minimize Long-Term Negative Effects of Homelessness



Differences Between Youth and Adult Homelessness

- Studies have shown that general PIT count methods are less accurate at recording youth homelessness compared to adults. Youth are often disconnected from community services and more likely than adults to be highly transient or hiding in plain sight among their peers.
- Many homeless youth don't want to be found.
 - They may be fleeing abuse or fear being placed in foster care.
 - Most aren't connected to formal supports such as the child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health systems.
 - Many avoid or are unaware of available services.



Adapted from Urban Institute Resources on Counting Homeless Youth

Engaging Youth in PIT Planning/Implementation

- Engaging youth and LGBT service providers in the count is a promising strategy for counting youth.
- Youth-focused and youth- and provider-driven effort
- Other strategies include young people serving as consultants, guides, or outreach workers.
- Non-service based counts and magnet events are some of the most effective strategies for supplementing your unsheltered youth counts

Adapted from Urban Institute Resources on Counting Homeless Youth



Develop Key Partnerships/Involve Youth

- Collaborate with Continuums of Care, youth advocates, McKinney-Vento school coordinators, Runaway and Homeless Youth Providers such as street outreach, and Independent Living Programs, Public Systems of Care, Faith communities, and government agencies such as CASA, LGBT, etc.
- Recruit organizations serving homeless youth and currently and formerly homeless youth to inform strategic planning.
- Collaborate with McKinney-Vento school homeless liaisons to include data on homeless students as part of a supplement to the PIT count.
- Involve youth by: Having them advocate on social media to raise awareness of the PIT Count; utilizing their knowledge of hot spots where homeless youth may congregate both on the day of the count and during the pre-count planning



Schools as PIT Count Partners

- Encourages CoCs to involve a variety of community partners to help plan and execute the count
- School district local liaisons and youth service providers are named specifically as important partners given their experience in reaching and serving homeless youth



Schools as PIT Count Partners

- Schools can provide valuable insights into and help with
 - Recruiting count volunteers
 - Selecting youth-friendly count sites
 - Creating a welcoming and youth-friendly environment at count sites
 - Selecting youth-friendly incentives for count participation
 - Suggesting other local youth service providers to assist with the count
- Local liaisons and school personnel may volunteer to administer PIT count surveys if conducted off school premises and during non-work hours



Recommended Practices for Schools: Information-Sharing

- Schools can help get the word out about the PIT count by
 - Posting youth-friendly information about the count throughout schools, including
 - Who the target population is (youth experiencing homelessness under the HUD definition)
 - How/where/when to participate in the count
 - Possible incentives are for participation
 - Informing youth identified as unaccompanied and homeless about the count and the possible benefits of participation



Prohibited Practices for Schools

- Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may not disclose personally identifiable information about students without the prior written consent of a parent or eligible student (a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education)
- Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), schools may not require students to complete a survey that reveals certain types of personal information without the prior written consent of a parent or eligible student (a student who has reached 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor) as part of a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education



LGBTQ+ Youth

- Homelessness is one of the most pressing issues facing a disproportionate number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth in our country today.
- Service providers also estimate anywhere from 20-40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ, while only 7-10% of the general youth population identifies as such.
- Youth homelessness is just as much of a challenge in rural communities as it is in urban communities.
- Young people in rural communities might be less inclined to identify as LGBTQ or further delay “coming out” when social norms in those communities are less safe or affirming of such identification.



Adapted from True Colors Fund resources

Room for Improvement

- Because each data source provides unique insights, the most accurate and complete picture of youth homelessness is developed when considering all of these sources
- CoCs and schools are encouraged to work together to share and leverage their respective data sets by referencing each other's numbers in reports and public talking points, as appropriate, and using multiple sources of data to inform local efforts to serve homeless youth



Resources

- [Youth Count Texas! 2016 Toolkit](#) by Texas Network of Youth Services
- [Culturally Sensitive Data Gathering](#) by Texas Network of Youth Services
- [Youth Count! Process Study](#) by the Urban Institute
- [We Count, California!: Lessons Learned from Efforts to Improve Youth Inclusion in California's 2015 Point-in-Time Counts](#) by the California Homeless Youth Project
- [Voices of Youth Count Toolkit](#) by Chapin Hall
- [Stand Up and Be Counted: Better Data Collection on Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- [Youth Count Toolkit](#) by the True Colors Fund
- [HUD Point-in-Time Count Collaboration in North Carolina](#) by National Center for Homeless Education



Resources Continued

- [What Works to End Youth Homelessness](#) by The National Network for Youth
- [Missed Opportunities: Pregnant and Parenting Youth Experiencing Homelessness in America](#) by Voices of Youth Count and Chapin Hall
- [At the Intersections: A collaborative Resource on LGBTQ Youth Homelessness](#) by True Colors Fund
- [Engaging Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) by the National Health Care for the Homeless Council
- [Key Federal Terms and Definitions of Homelessness Among Youth](#)



Questions about the Safety Nets for Students and Families Project

- Email: safetynets@tnoys.org

- Website:

<http://tnoys.org/safety-nets-for-students/>

